



PHIL BRYANT  
GOVERNOR  
March 29, 2019

Andrew R. Wheeler  
Acting Administrator  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
William Jefferson Clinton Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

As we discussed recently via phone, Mississippi continues to experience devastating flooding along the Mississippi River and the Yazoo Backwater Area. The flooding began in February of this year and to date has affected over 500,000 acres and thousands of Mississippians. Unfortunately, this flooding is not uncommon. Over the past decade there have been nine flooding incidents, including the historic Mississippi River Flood of 2011. These floods have cost over \$377 million in damages, a number that will only increase once the current damage is fully assessed. People have experienced significant losses to their homes, businesses, and farms.

The flood plan for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Yazoo Backwater Project Area was originally designed with levees and pumps to reduce flooding; however, the full design was never realized. In 2008, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) vetoed a permit for the proposed Yazoo Backwater Area Pump Project under Section 404 (c) of the Clean Water Act. The pumps are a critical component to the flood plan in the backwater area. Had these pumps been in place, a large amount of the acreage that continually floods and is currently flooded would have been spared.

I am requesting that the EPA initiate the formal process of reviewing the 404 (c) veto of the Yazoo Backwater Area Pump Project. It is my understanding that the Army Corps has made a similar request and has indicated that there is new wetlands data that may be helpful. I hope that you and your team will engage with the Army Corps as well as stakeholders on this issue and begin a meaningful review of the 404 (c) veto. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be helpful in this process or if you would like to tour the damage first hand.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Bryant", written over a circular embossed seal.

Phil Bryant  
Governor

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